

and  
ME  
BEST WEST  
NO. 8

THE 8<sup>th</sup> BIG ISSUE OF-

# BEST OF THE WEST







WEB COMIC  
UNIVERSE.COM



**THE SECRET OF TREASURE CAVE-**  
How Gray Shadow Tracked  
Down the Mystery of  
Spike's Sudden Wealth-

**GIVEN!** BOYS! GIRLS!  
LADIES!  
MEN!  
**WE GIVE YOU CASH OR PREMIUMS!**



**OUR 58th YEAR ACT NOW!**

**MAIL COUPON! YOU GET BIG CATALOG**

Candid Cameras with carrying case, Telescopes, Watches (sent postage paid). SIMPLY GIVE pictures with White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE easily sold to friends, neighbors, relatives at 25c a box (with picture).

**LET'S GO!**

Alarm Clocks, Pen and Pencil Sets, Bibles, Billboards, Telescopes, Roller Skates, Blankets, Aluminum Ware, Record Players, Movie Machines (sent postage paid). Rush coupon to start!

**OUR 58th YEAR**

**WE TRUST YOU! MAIL NOW!**

Wilson Chem. Co. Dept. ME 105 Tyrone, Pa. Date.....

Gentlemen: Please send me on trial 14 colorful art pictures with 14 boxes of White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE to sell at 25c a box (with picture). I will remit amount asked within 30 days, select a Premium or keep Cash Commission as explained under Premium wanted in catalog sent with order, postage paid to start.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

ST \_\_\_\_\_ R. D. \_\_\_\_\_ BOX \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT LAST NAME HERE \_\_\_\_\_

Paste coupon on postal card or mail in envelope today

**OUR 58th YEAR - WE ARE RELIABLE!**

Ukuleles, Radios, Pen & Pencil Sets, Food Choppers, Watches (sent postage paid).

Flashlights, Footballs, Corn Poppers, Fishing Sets, Telescopes.

Archery Sets, Dolls, Wrist Watches, Footballs, Pencil Sharpeners, School Boxes, Roller Skates, Walleis, Flashlights. Mail coupon for solve and pictures to start.

Pocket Watches, Carving Sets, Corn Poppers. Write or mail coupon to start. We trust you.

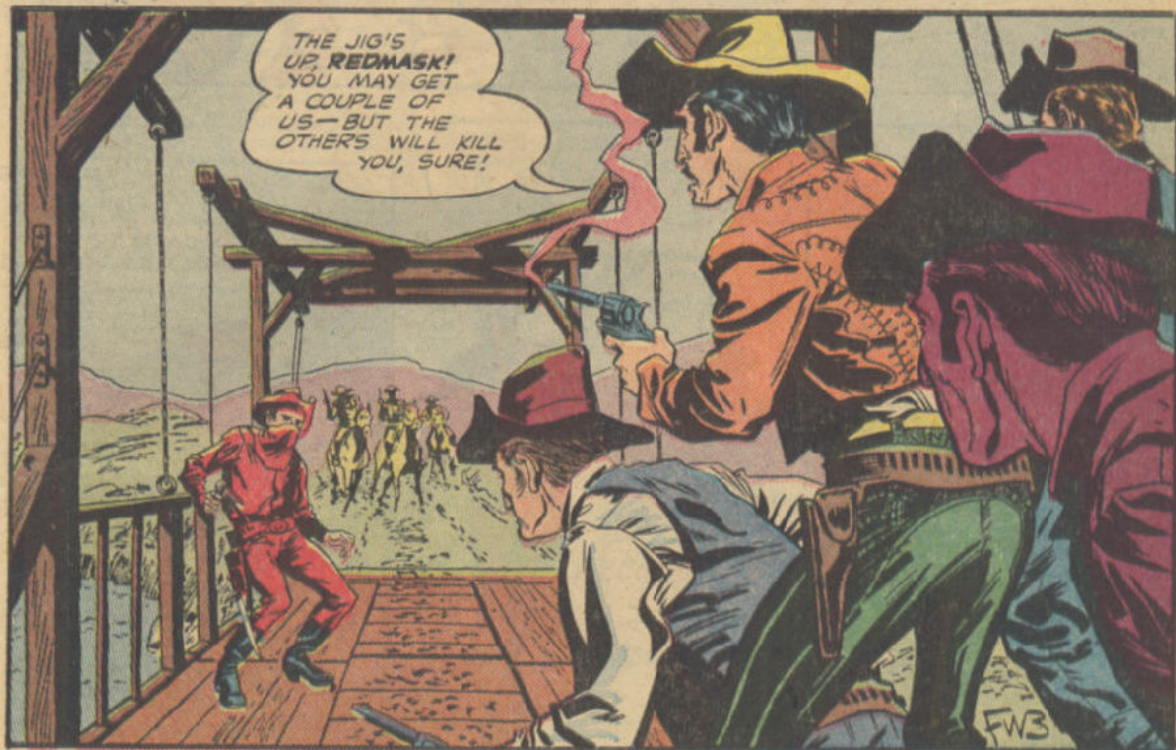
Rifles, Motion Picture Cameras with roll of film, Roller Skates, Radios. Mail coupon to start.



# TIM HOLT

THEY COME FROM THE MILK RIVER COUNTRY OF MONTANA, FROM THE GOLD TOWNS OF NEVADA, FROM THE DESERTS OF ARIZONA AND NEW MEXICO! OUTLAWS ALL, AND KILLERS—THIRSTING FOR ONE MAN'S DEATH! THAT MAN IS **REDMASK**, AND HE FINDS THAT HE MUST RIDE ALONE TO MEET THESE MEN, AND ACT AS—

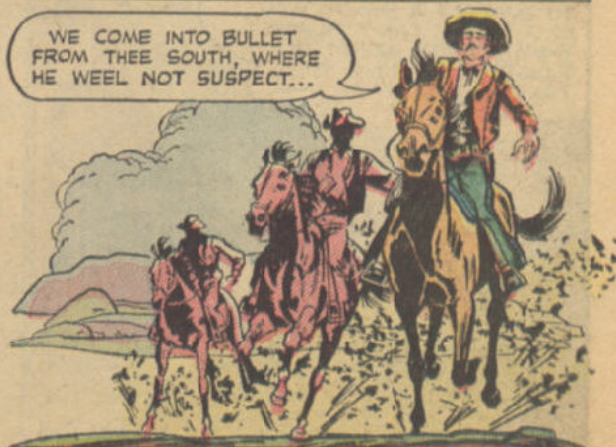
**"BAIT FOR  
BANDIT BULLETS!"**



**BLACKJACK TRAVIS** RIDES LIKE THE WIND, STOPPING NEITHER TO EAT OR TO DRINK...



ACROSS THE HOT DESERT SANDS COMES **EL SOMBRERO**.





THE SUNDANCE KID GALLOPS PAST RED BUTTES...



IN THE DUSTY STREETS OF BULLET WORD RUNS, LIKE THE WIND, OF THE COMING OF THE BAD-MEN...



BUT EVERYWHERE REDMASK GOES, THE ANSWER IS THE SAME...



SOME HOURS LATER, IN THE FOOTHILLS AROUND CACTUS PASS...







BUT AS THE SUNDANCE RID RACES OVER A SHRUB-GROWN TRAIL, THE EARTH OPENS UP BENEATH HIM—



AN HOUR AFTERWARD, IN BULLET'S LITTLE JAILHOUSE...

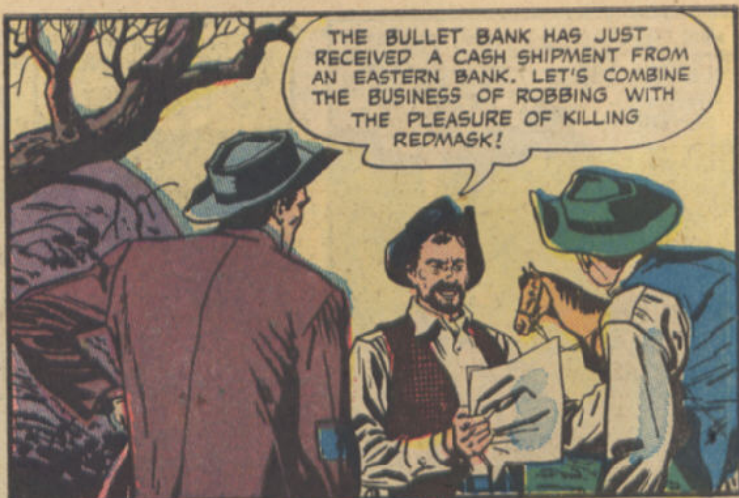
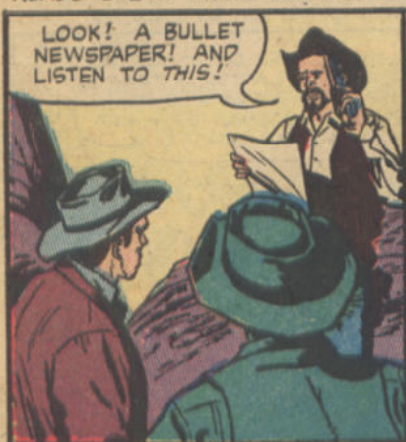


HOURS LATER, AS REDMASK GALLOPS THROUGH THE FOOTHILLS OF THE RIPSRAW RANGES, HE SCATTERS HANDBILLS...





NEXT MORNING, BLACKJACK TRAVIS READS ONE OF THOSE PAPERS...



IN BULLET, AS THE SUN MOUNTS IN THE SKY—



SUDDENLY, THICK PUFFS OF YELLOW SMOKE POUR FROM THE BANK'S FIREPLACE...



OUTSIDE THE BULLET BANK...





AS REDMASK PARADES HIS PRISONERS ALONG MAIN STREET—



WE WEEEL CATCH THEES REDMASK AN' HANG HEEM TO THE HIGHEST TREE EEN BULLET!



THEY'RE RIGHT AT MY HEELS!



HE ESCAPED US! BUT HE WEEEL NOT ESCAPE FOR LONG! WE WEEEL FREE THEE SUNDANCE KEEED AND HEES MEN, THEN WE WEEEL GO AFTER HEEM!

AND A LITTLE LATER—!



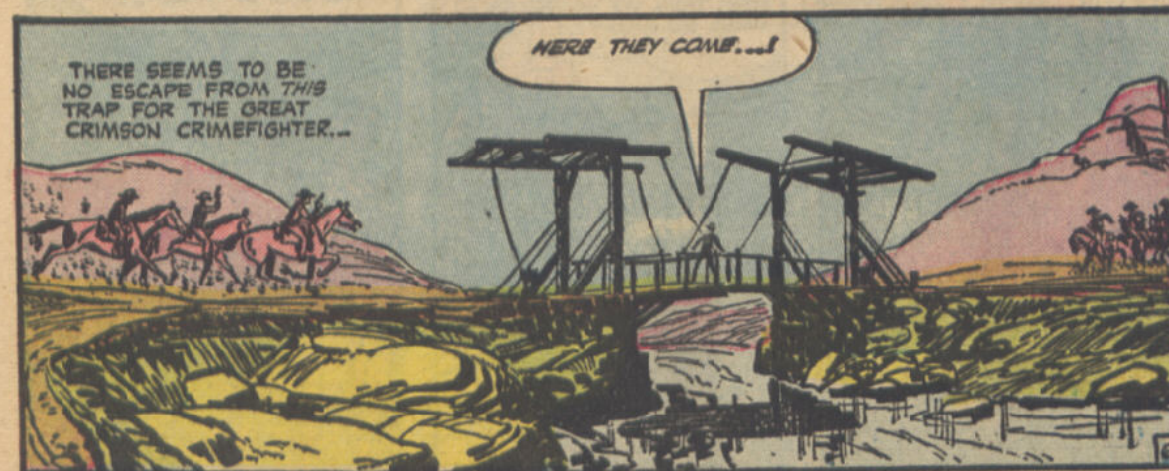
HE WEEEL NOT BE FAR AWAY! BEFORE THE SUN GOES DOWN, WE WEEEL KICK OUT HEES LIFE AT THE END OF A ROPE!



OUTSIDE TOWN—

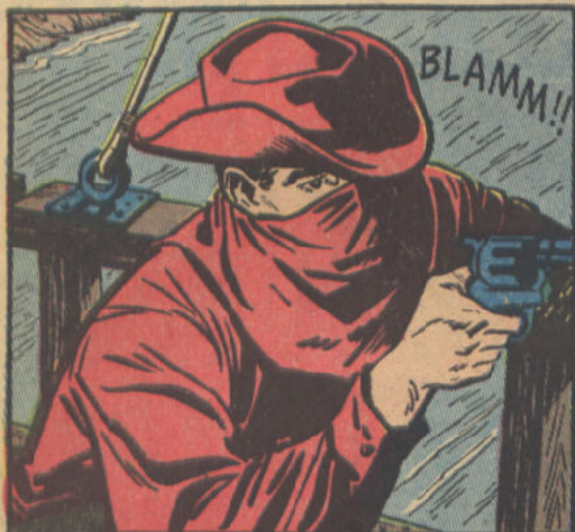


AND SO, AS REDMASK POUNDS ONTO THE DRAWBRIDGE—



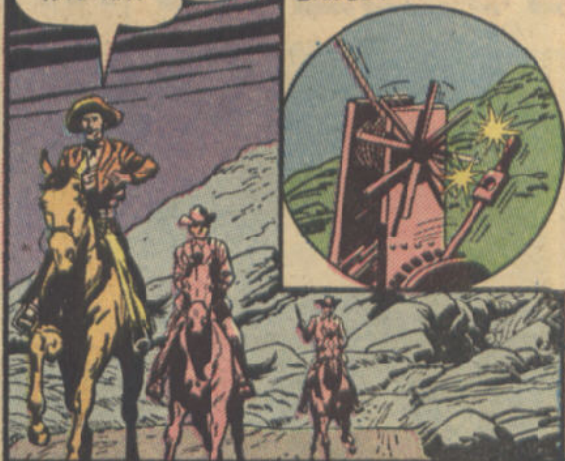


THEN REDMASK'S HAND DROPS AND LIFTS. HIS COLT SIXGUN ROARS!



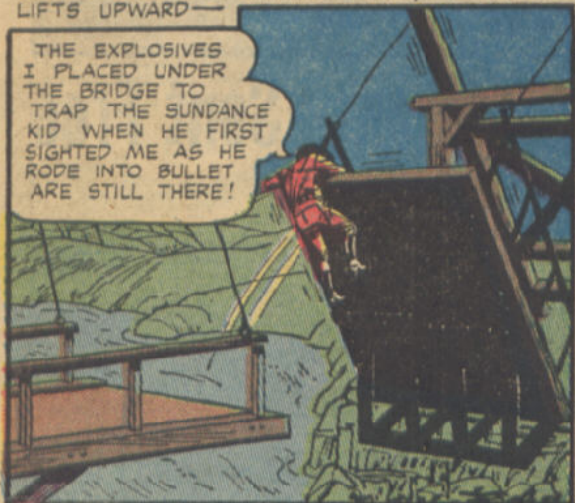
HA! HA! HA!  
HE EES SO SCARED,  
HE MISSES US  
BY TWENTY FOOTS!  
HA! HA!

BUT REDMASK'S BULLET  
STRIKES HOME—ON THE  
CONTROL LEVER THAT  
OPERATES THE DRAW-  
BRIDGE!

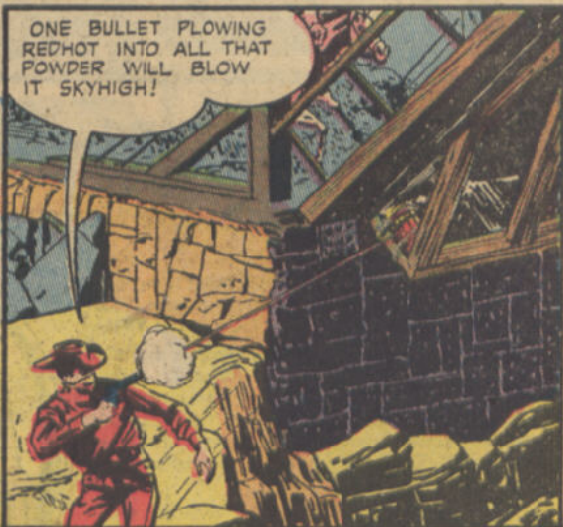


WITH A SQUEAL OF GRATING CHAINS, THE BRIDGE  
LIFTS UPWARD—

THE EXPLOSIVES  
I PLACED UNDER  
THE BRIDGE TO  
TRAP THE SUNDANCE  
KID WHEN HE FIRST  
SIGHTED ME AS HE  
RODE INTO BULLET  
ARE STILL THERE!



ONE BULLET FLOWING  
REDHOT INTO ALL THAT  
POWDER WILL BLOW  
IT SKYHIGH!



WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS AWAY...

ON YOUR FEET, YOU  
MURDERING RATS! YOU'RE  
GOING BACK TO JAIL, AND  
THIS TIME YOU'RE GOING  
TO **STAY** THERE!



THE END



# FREE 10 HITLER STAMPS



## 10 Scarce Stamps—All Different—Sent Free

TO SECURE NAMES FOR OUR MAILING LIST

MAIL coupon at once. We'll send you this fascinating set of 10 Hitler stamps. Different sizes, colors, values. NO COST TO YOU.

These valuable stamps were issued by the short-lived nation of Bohemia-Moravia. They are much sought after. Now they are becoming SCARCE. And since the nation is no longer in existence—no new issues can be minted. Our supply is limited. So, don't ask for more than one set.

### FREE 32-Page Book

In addition to the FREE Hitler Stamps, we'll also include other interesting offers for your inspection—PLUS a FREE copy of our helpful, informative book, "How To Collect Postage Stamps." It contains fascinating and true stories such as the one about the 1¢ stamp (which a schoolboy gladly sold for \$1.50) and which was later bought for FORTY THOUSAND DOLLARS.

This Free Book also contains expert advice on collecting; shows how to get started; where and how to find rare stamps; how to tell their real value; how to mount them, trade them; how to start a stamp club; exciting stamp games, etc. It has pictures galore! Full pages of pictures showing odd stamps depicting native men and women from faraway lands; ferocious beasts, etc.

### MAIL COUPON NOW

Be the first in your neighborhood to have this valuable set of Hitler Stamps. Your friends will envy you for it and want to buy the set from you. It will become one of the most prized sets of any stamp collection. But you must hurry if you want to get the 10 Hitler Stamps FREE. This special offer may have to be withdrawn soon. If coupon has already been used, write direct to: Littleton Stamp Co., Dept. 4MEC, Littleton, New Hampshire. (Enclose 10¢ to help cover postage and handling).



Supply Limited  
Mail Coupon At Once!



LITTLETON STAMP CO.,  
DEPT. 4MEC LITTLETON, N. H.

Send—AT NO COST TO ME—the valuable set of 10 Hitler stamps and the informative booklet, "How To Collect Postage Stamps." I enclose 10¢ to help cover postage and handling.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_



# STRAIGHT ARROW

THERE WERE ONLY THREE HOLES IN THE GROUND, YET EACH WAS FILLED WITH A DEATH WORSE THAN THE ONE NEXT TO IT! ALONE AGAINST THE EVIL FEATHER HAT AND HIS COMANCHE PEOPLE, STRAIGHT ARROW MUST DARE THOSE DEATHS IF HE HOPES TO WIN FREEDOM FOR THE COMANCHES! HOPEFULLY HE FACES THE DREAD MENACE OF—

"THE PITS OF PERIL!"



A CLOUD OF GLOOM HAS COME UPON THE COMANCHE NATION. AN EVIL CHIEFTAIN HAS MADE HIMSELF RULER—

ONLY IN MY DREAD PITS  
WILL YOU LEARN I RULE  
COMANCHERIA!



THERE ARE SOME TO WHOM FEATHER HAT BRINGS DEATH IN THE NIGHT, FOR THEIR POWER IS GREAT AMONG THE PEOPLE...

YOU ARE THE  
BIG CHIEF! WITH  
YOU GONE, I WILL  
STAND ALONE  
AMONG THE CHIEFS!







ONLY ONE WARRIOR—YOUNG **STRONG BOW**—DARES TO STAND AGAINST HIM...

WERE STRAIGHT ARROW HERE, YOU WOULD NOT TAKE CONTROL OF THE TRIBE!

SAH! NO MAN IS AS GREAT AS FEATHER HAT! THROW HIM IN HIS TEPEE!



TOMORROW, HE DIES AT DAWN, BY THE PIT DEATH!



MY ONLY WISH IS THAT STRAIGHT ARROW WERE HERE TOO—TO FACE THE PITS OF PERIL WITH YOU!



AS THE MOON RISES ABOVE THE PLAINS, TWO TERRIFIED GIRLS RACE FROM THE COMANCHE VILLAGE...

WE MUST FIND HELP SOMEWHERE!

IF WE DON'T, OUR BROTHER, STRONGBOW DIES AT DAWN!



NO USE RUNNING!

WE'RE CAUGHT!



YOU LOOK FRIGHTENED! HAS NOT STEVE ADAMS ALWAYS BEEN THE FRIEND OF LITTLE FAWN AND SOFT DEER?

OH, YES! WE THOUGHT YOU WERE FEATHER HAT!

AS THE COMANCHE GIRLS TELL THEIR STORY, A GRIM SCOWL GROWS ON STEVE ADAMS' FOREHEAD...



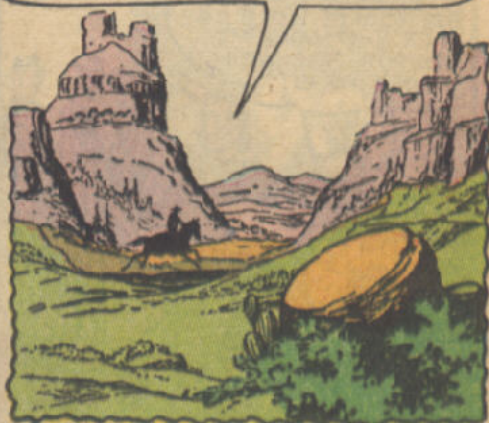
SO, FEATHER HAT SLAYS GOOD COMANCHES. DOES HE? TO FORCE THE OTHERS TO RIDE AGAINST THE SETTLERS AND RANCHERS!



TAKE THE GIRLS TO MESQUITE MOLLY, PACKY! I-ER- HAVE SOME BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO!



MY RANCH KEEPS ME BUSY ROUNDING UP CATTLE AND TRAIL DRIVING THEM TO MARKET! I'VE BEEN GONE A LONG TIME FROM THE COMANCHE COUNCIL FIRES...!



A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THE BROKEN BOW RANCH LIES SUNDOWN VALLEY, AND IN IT THERE IS A VAST CAVE. ITS WALLS GLITTER WITH GOLDEN CRYSTALS, AND ON THEM HANGS A GOLDEN BOW, COMANCHE GARB AND WAR PAINT!



A MIGHTY GOLDEN-PALOMINO STANDS WITHIN THE CAVE! A MOMENT AFTER STEVE ADAMS DOFFS THE CLOTHES OF STEVE ADAMS—HE APPEARS AS THE COMANCHE CHIEFTAIN, STRAIGHT ARROW!



AN HOUR BEFORE DAWN, IN A COMANCHE TEPEE —

SO! FEATHER HAT FEARS TO FLING ME TO HIS PITS. HE COMES TO SLAY ME IN THE NIGHT!



IT IS NOT FEATHER HAT, BUT STRAIGHT ARROW! I COME TO TAKE YOUR PLACE! GIVE ME YOUR GARMENTS!

TO TAKE MY PLACE! BUT **YOU** WILL HAVE TO FACE THE PIT DEATHS, IF YOU DO THAT? WHY NOT FLEE WITH ME?



BECAUSE FEATHER HAT MUST BE PUNISHED. RIDE TO FORT COBB ON FURY! BRING THE CAVALRY. I STAY HERE TO DARE THE PITS IN ORDER TO KEEP FEATHER HAT IN CAMP WHILE HE WAITS FOR ME — **AS YOU!** — TO DIE! IF I CAN HOLD HIM LONG ENOUGH IT WILL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO BRING THE BLUE COATS!



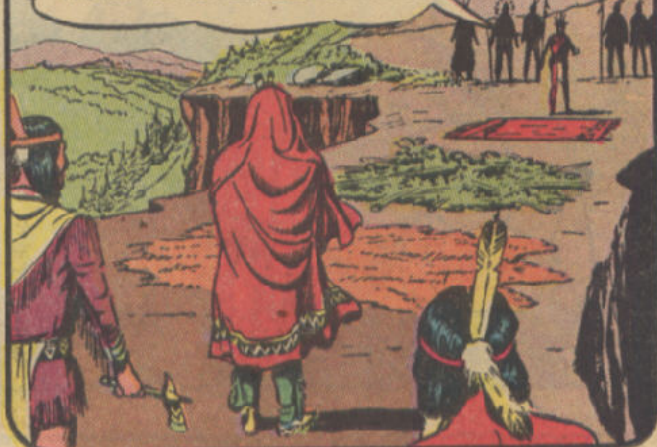


AT DAWN, IN THE GARMENTS AND ROBE OF YOUNG STRONGBOW, STRAIGHT ARROW IS LEAD FROM HIS TEPEE...

STRONGBOW IS AFRAID! SEE HOW HE HIDES HIS FACE, THAT NONE MAY SEE HOW PALE WITH FRIGHT HE IS!



THERE ARE THE PITS, STRONGBOW! EACH IS COVERED, HIDING THE MANNER OF DEATH EACH HOLDS! IF YOU SUCCEED IN ESCAPING ALL THREE—YOU GO FREE! BUT THERE IS NO DANGER OF THAT!



WITH CONFIDENT SMIRKS ON THEIR FACES, FEATHER HAT AND HIS RENEGADE CREW TAKE THEIR PLACES...



I DON'T KNOW WHAT AWAITS ME, BUT I FEAR IT NOT!



THERE IS A ROAR THAT SHAKES THE GROUND! A GREEN-EYED DEMON HURTTLES FORWARD!

THE LARGEST PANTHER I EVER SAW! ALMOST AS BIG AS A TIGER!



GLEAMING FANGS GLISTEN IN THE OPEN MOUTH! A HOT FETID BREATH BURNS THE COMANCHE CHIEFTAIN'S FACE!

ONE BITE OF THOSE JAWS, AND HE COULD TAKE MY HEAD OFF...!





TWISTING FREE, STRAIGHT ARROW  
SNATCHES UP THE HIDE THAT COVERED  
THE PIT'S MOUTH. TWISTING IT AROUND  
A FOREARM, HE MEETS THE PANTHER  
WITH COLD STEEL!

HIS FANGS CATCH IN THE  
HIDE—WHILE THEY HOLD  
HIM, MY KNIFE SINKS  
INTO HIS HEART!



THE SECOND PIT IS COVERED  
WITH LOGS AND BRUSHWOOD—



INSIDE IT STANDS A GAUNT, STARVED GRIZZLY  
BEAR TOWERING HIGH ABOVE THE COMANCHE!

WHERE DID  
FEATHER HAT  
FIND  
SUCH  
ANIMALS?



THE GRIZZLY LUNGES FORWARD—!

STRONGBOW IS TOO YOUNG  
A WARRIOR TO HAVE  
WITHSTOOD THESE TESTS!  
ONLY I CAN HOPE TO KEEP  
FEATHER HAT HERE WAITING  
FOR MY DEATH—AND HOW  
LONG CAN EVEN I KEEP  
HIM HERE IS THE BIG  
QUESTION...!



BACK AND FORTH MAN AND  
BEAST REEL AND SWAY!  
POWERFUL HAIRY ARMS  
REACH OUT AND CLOSE!

MY RIBS ARE CRACK-  
ING! HE IS TOO  
STRONG FOR ME...!



ABOVE HIM GAPES A JAW  
THAT DWARFS THE JAW OF  
THE PANTHER! FOAM FLECKS  
THE SNARLING LIPS!





BUT STRAIGHT ARROW IS ALSO STEVE ADAMS OF THE COW CAMPS AND THE RODEO ARENA!

THIS LENGTH OF RAWHIDE WILL MAKE A GOOD PIGGIN STRING!



AS RODEO CONTESTANTS WHIP THEIR PIGGIN STRINGS AROUND THE ANKLES OF DOWNED COWS, SO THE COMANCHE CHIEF WHIPS THE LEATHER THONG AROUND THOSE JAWS!

HIS GRIP LOOSENS AS HE STRUGGLES TO FREE HIS JAWS!

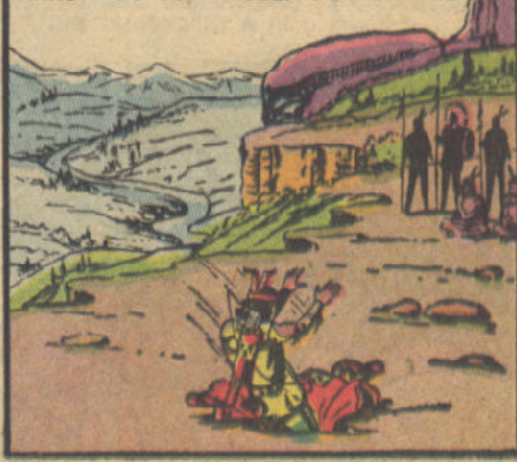


IN A MOMENT, STRAIGHT ARROW IS FREE TO MOVE! HE HURLS HIMSELF AGAINST THE SHAGGY MONSTER, AND HIS LONG HUNTING KNIFE DRINKS DEEP!

MY KNIFE HAS FOUND HIS HEART!



ONE MORE PIT REMAINS! TATTERED AND TORN, HIS FLESH BLEEDING, STRAIGHT ARROW HURLS HIMSELF DOWNWARD...



THERE IS NO BEAST IN THIS HOLE!... ONLY SOFT, WET SAND—QUICKSAND!

TRICKED! MY LEAP CARRIED ME DOWN A COUPLE OF FEET INTO THE QUICKSAND. IT PULLS ME DOWN—FASTER AND FASTER! AND THE WALLS ARE SO SMOOTH, I CAN'T GET A GRIP ON THEM!



HU! STRONGBOW IS GONE! IT IS STRAIGHT ARROW DOWN BELOW! ALL THE BETTER! WE GO NOW TO RAID THE RANCHES AND THE SETTLEMENTS. MY POWER IS SECURE AT LAST!



SLOWLY, BUT INEXORABLY, THE QUICKSAND DRAGS THE COMANCHE CHIEF DOWN AND DOWN. ALL HIS STRENGTH, ALL HIS SKILL ARE NO HELP TO HIM!

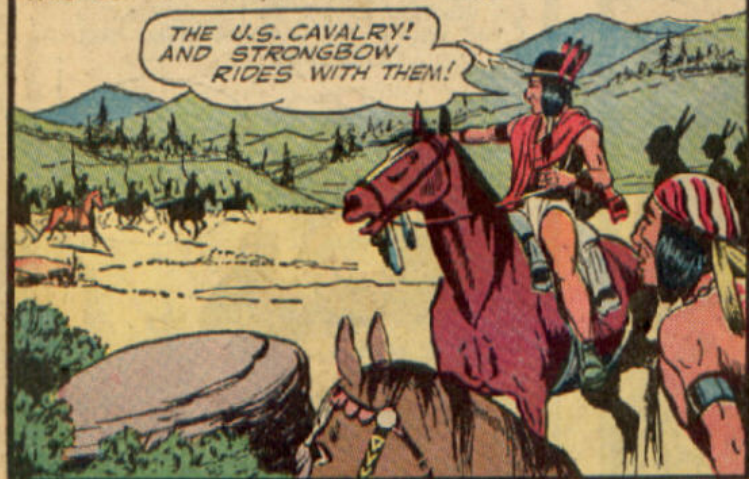
CAN'T DO A THING... GOING TO DIE... ALONE... HELPLESS...





BUT, AS FEATHER HAT AND HIS RENEGADES  
RIDE OUT OF CAMP, A BUGLE BLARES, AND—!

THE U.S. CAVALRY!  
AND STRONGBOW  
RIDES WITH THEM!

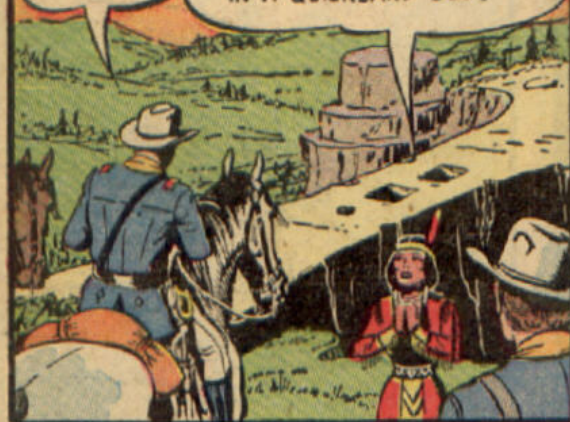


SABRES FLASH IN THE SUN AS  
THEY DRIVE THE RENEGADES BACK...



WHAT OF  
STRAIGHT  
ARROW?

HE IS DEAD! DEAD IN  
THE THIRD AND LAST PIT!  
SMOTHERED AND DROWNED  
IN A QUICKSAND BED!



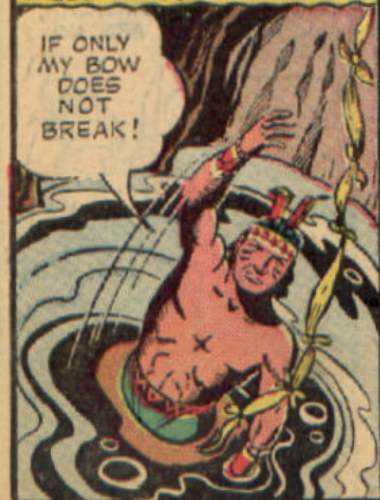
BUT THE GREAT  
COMANCHE WAR  
CHIEF IS NOT  
YET DEAD!  
FOR AS THE  
CLINGING  
SANDS RISE  
UP TO HIS  
LEGS, HE  
KNOTS HIS  
TORN AND  
RIPPED JACKET  
TO HIS WARBOW.

I MAY  
GET OUT  
OF THIS!



HURLING HIS BOW HIGH, HE  
HOLDS HIS BREATH AS IT  
FALLS ACROSS THE MOUTH...

IF ONLY  
MY BOW  
DOES  
NOT  
BREAK!



HAND OVER HAND HE CLIMBS  
UPWARD AND REACHES SAFETY.

MADE  
IT!



FEATHER HAT IS TAKEN TO BE  
PUNISHED, WITH HIS RENEGADES.

YOU DELAYED HIM LONG  
ENOUGH FOR STRONGBOW  
TO WARN ME AND FOR ME  
TO BRING THE CAVALRY!  
WE'LL NEVER  
FORGET THE  
FIGHT YOU  
PUT UP IN  
THOSE  
PITS!

FRANKLY,  
COLONEL,  
NEITHER  
WILL I!



THE END



# HEY KIDS!

Be the first to get this terrific set of Cowboys and Indians!



MAIL COUPON TODAY

LUCKY PRODUCTS Dept. M17 A  
Carle Place, N. Y.

Please send me the following. If not delighted my money will be cheerfully refunded.

☐ 40 western pieces, I enclose \$5.00

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ONLY  
**98¢**

Fun for all. Contains 40 plastic assorted western pieces. Cowboys, Indians, Horses all in action poses and a wonderful assortment of western charms. Attractive colors. A terrific collection full of action. Ideal for kids to play with indoors, outdoors and while traveling. Sure to make a hit with everyone.



**LIGHTS UP THE INSTANT YOU DROP COIN!** Just insert a penny, nickel, dime or quarter into the slot on top. In a split second your spectacular Television Bank lights up—in a big, BIG way! **BIGGEST ATTRACTION EVER!**

Everyone will want to see this amazing new Television Bank. Your friends, relatives and neighbors can't resist putting in coins to see this show!

**TURN OF KNOB SHOWS NEXT EXCITING PICTURE!** After you've looked your admiring fill at one picture, just turn center knob for next thrill-packed "show". Light goes out automatically as new picture appears. To light new picture, bank another coin. SIX exciting pictures—a fight, a hilarious cartoon, a tense rodeo scene, a swell figure skater, a dramatic dance team and a circus clown with his trick dog!

**PUTS YOU "IN THE MONEY" FAST**

Your savings pile up PLENTY FAST with this marvelous new Television Bank! Everyone wants to see all six pictures—your savings grow and grow by leaps and bounds! Rich-looking mahogany finish with four simulated dials and speaker grille. 4 1/2" x 4" and ruggedly constructed. Will give you years of fun and big savings!

**SEAGEE CO., Dept. M16**  
2 Allen Street, New York 2, N. Y.

## LOTS OF FUN AND MONEY! WITH THIS TELEVISION BANK

**LIGHTS UP!  
LIKE BIGGEST, COSTLIEST  
TELEVISION SETS!**

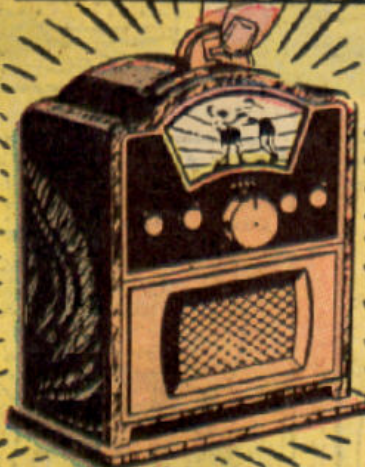
- SHOWS BRILLIANT PICTURES IN FULL COLOR!
- HITS EVERY TELEVISION HIGH—FIGHTS AND ALL!
- THRILLS YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS FOR EVER!
- AND... MAKES YOUR SAVINGS MOUNT UP FAST!

ALL-STEEL CONSTRUCTION

**ONLY \$1.98**

COMPLETE WITH BATTERY AND BULB!

**GUARANTEED TO DELIGHT YOU!** Bank comes complete with bulb, battery and strong key for opening and emptying your wealth of savings.



**BE THE FIRST IN YOUR CROWD TO HAVE THIS WONDERFUL NEW TELEVISION BANK! SEND NO MONEY! ORDER YOURS TODAY!**

**SEAGEE CO.,**

Dept. M16

2 Allen Street,

New York 2, N. Y.

☐ Please rush me my TELEVISION BANK. I agree to pay postman \$1.98 plus few cents postage with understanding that if I am not delighted I may return bank in 5 days for full refund of purchase price.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Print Plainly)

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I enclose \$1.98. You pay postage. Same money-back guarantee.





**YOU CAN BE  
THE GHOST RIDER!**

**ONLY  
\$1.00**

**AMAZE YOUR FRIENDS  
WITH THIS WEIRD SCARF  
THAT BECOMES A REAL  
GHOST RIDER MASK  
THAT GLOWS IN THE DARK!**

A jet-black scarf  
...with the name of  
**THE GHOST RIDER** bannered  
on it...and a **SPOOKY**  
white mask that becomes a  
**GHOST RIDER SKULL** when  
the mask is tied on...!



**MAIL  
COUPON  
AND  
\$1.00**

**COMPIX, Inc. Dept. BW8  
10 Murray St. New York 7, N.Y.**

Name

Address

City  State

No C.O.D.s ☐ Send check or money order



# CHRIST RIDER

## THE

"CHARGE!"  
CALL THE QUICK-  
TEMPOED BUGLE  
NOTES, AS THEY  
SPLIT THE MORNING  
CALM ASUNDER.  
"CHARGE!"

AND THE MEN IN GRAY  
LEAVE THEIR TRENCHES  
AND MOVE GRIMLY  
FORWARD INTO A VALLEY  
OF DEATH...

A MILE AWAY, A UNION  
SOLDIER PULLS A  
LANYARD...

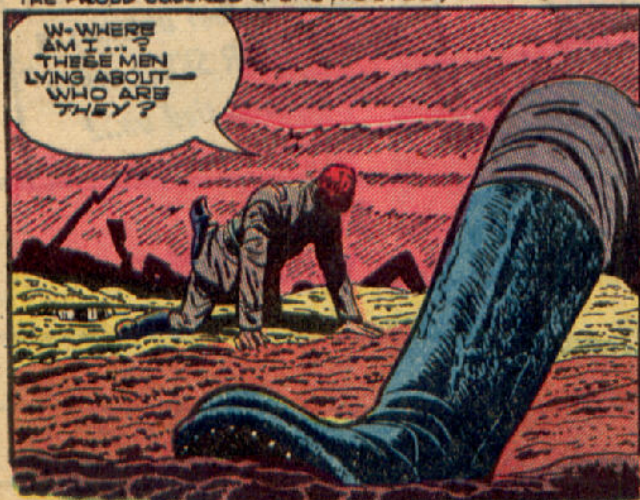
WHOOOOSH!  
THE SHELL ARCS  
THROUGH THE AIR—  
IT'S NOSE BEGINS TO  
TIP—IT SCREAMS  
DOWNWARD—IT  
SCORES A DIRECT HIT!  
AND, THUS, AMIDST  
AGONIZED SCREAMS,  
BEGINS THE STRANGE  
TALE OF THE GHOST  
RIDER AND—

THE  
**MAD**  
COMMANDER!

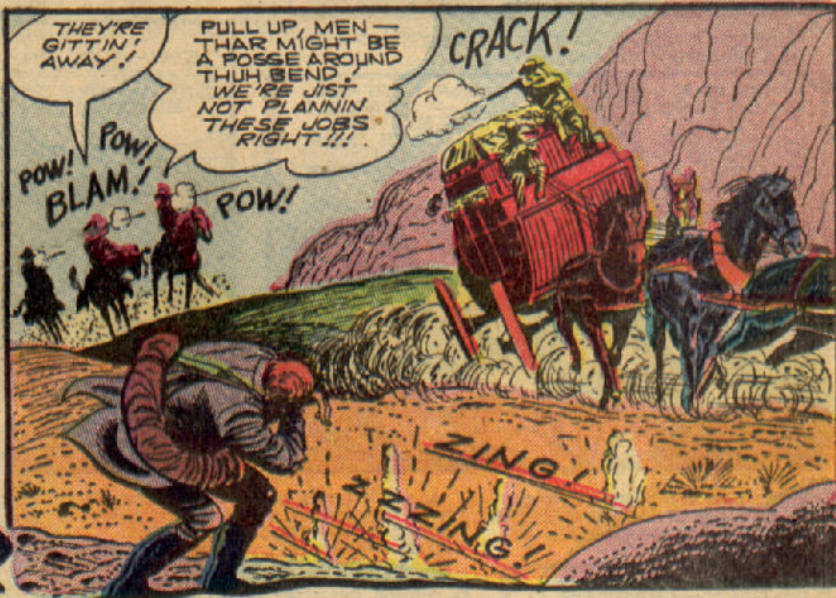
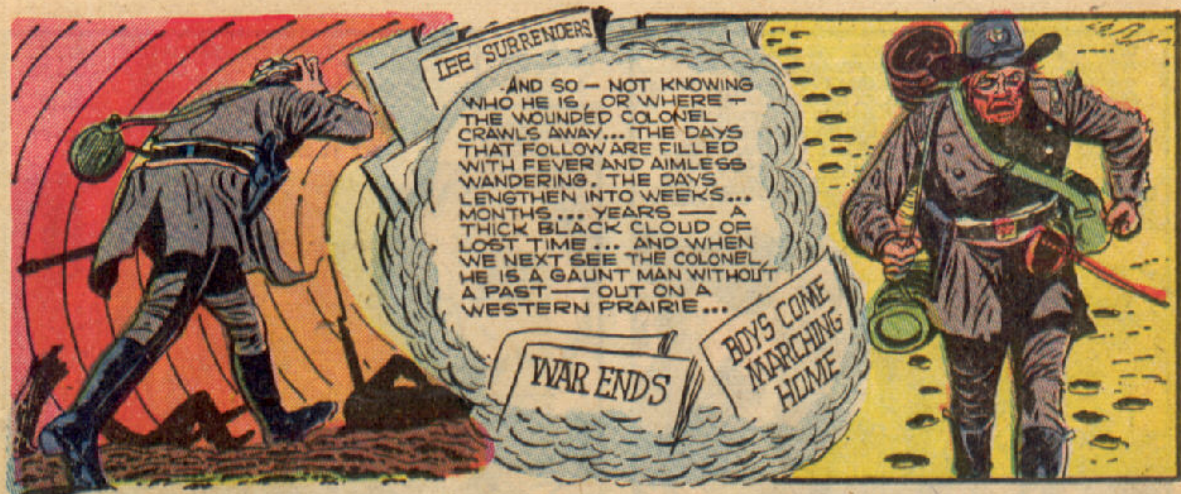


THE WINDS SLOWLY DRAG THE SMOKE AWAY...  
THE PROUD COLONEL OPENS HIS EYES, GROANS—

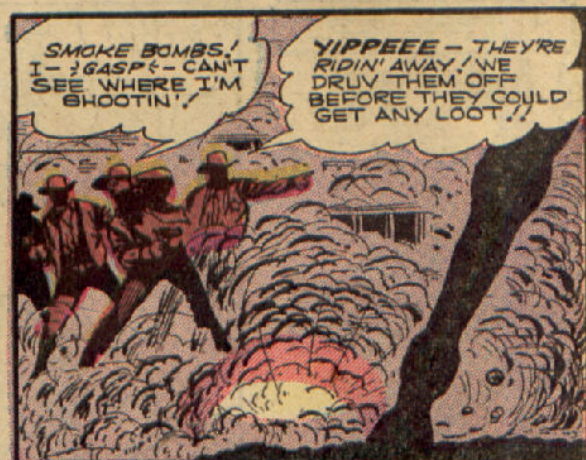
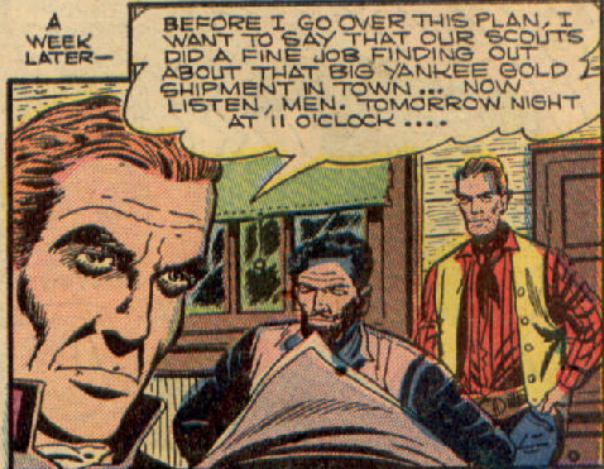
NIGHT FALLS, CASTING ITS SHROUD ON  
THE DEAD AND THOSE WOUNDED IN BODY  
—AND MIND...





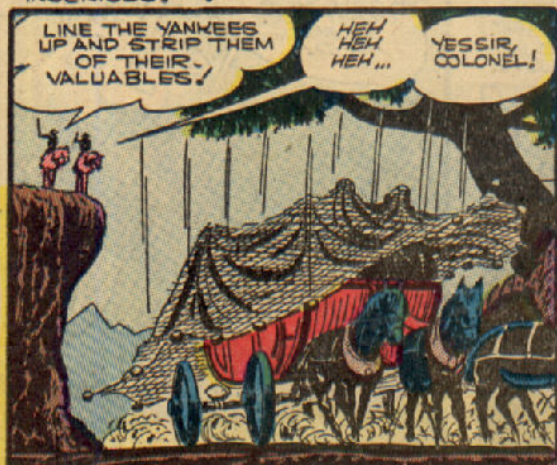








THE COLONEL IS A TACTICAL GENIUS / HIS SECOND PLAN IS, IF ANYTHING, EVEN MORE INGENUOUS.



LINE THE YANKEES UP AND STRIP THEM OF THEIR VALUABLES!

HEH HEH HEH...

YESSIR, COLONEL!

HOODWINKED BY THE OWLHOOTS, HE EVEN APPLIES HIS MILITARY GENIUS TO RUSTLING.



SOAKIN' THUH PRAIRIE GRASS WITH OIL, THEN GETTIN' FIRE TO IT, SHORE WORKED LIKE A CHARM. IT CUT OFF THUH COWHANDS FROM THEIR STEERS — AN' DROVE THUH HERD RIGHT INTO OUR HANDS!

A TRAIN ROBBERY BASED ON A PLAN BY THE COLONEL GOES OFF WITHOUT A HITCH —



THE GANG GETS BOLDER AND BOLDER... THEIR MAD COMMANDER NEVER RESTS... HE LEADS EVERY RAID / AND SOON HIS PICTURE APPEARS ON REWARD POSTERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.



SOME MONTHS LATER, A TREMBLING WOMAN STEPS OFF A WESTERN TRAIN —



YOU MRS. ELLSWORTH, MA'AM?

YES, THANK YOU FOR MEETING ME, SHERIFF...

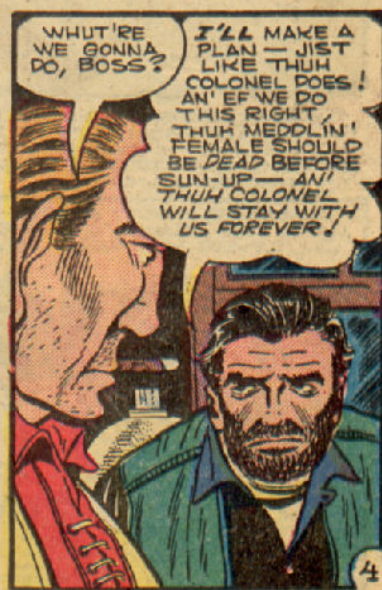
I-I ALMOST HOPE I'M WRONG — BUT ALL THOSE CIRCULARS LOOK EXACTLY LIKE MY HUSBAND WHO WAS REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION THREE YEARS AGO...

OH-OH! THUH BOSS BETTER HEAR ABOUT THIS PRONTO!



WHUT'RE WE GONNA DO, BOSS?

I'LL MAKE A PLAN — JIST LIKE THUH COLONEL DOES! AN' EF WE DO THIS RIGHT, THUH MEDDLIN' FEMALE SHOULD BE DEAD BEFORE SUN-UP — AN' THUH COLONEL WILL STAY WITH US FOREVER!

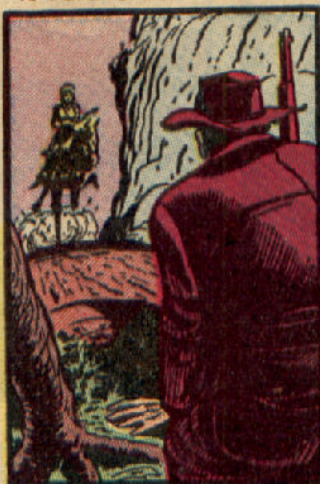




LATER THAT NIGHT, A NOTE IS THROWN THROUGH MRS. ELLSWORTH'S HOTEL WINDOW—



ACHING TO RESOLVE HER HORRIBLE UNCERTAINTY, MRS. ELLSWORTH FOLLOWS THE NOTE'S INSTRUCTIONS. ALONE AND UNARMED, THE BRAVE WOMAN RIDES OUT TO DEAD BRAVE'S GULCH...



I GOT A MESSAGE FROM YORE HUSBAND, MA'AM. IT'S RIGHT HERE IN MY HAND!

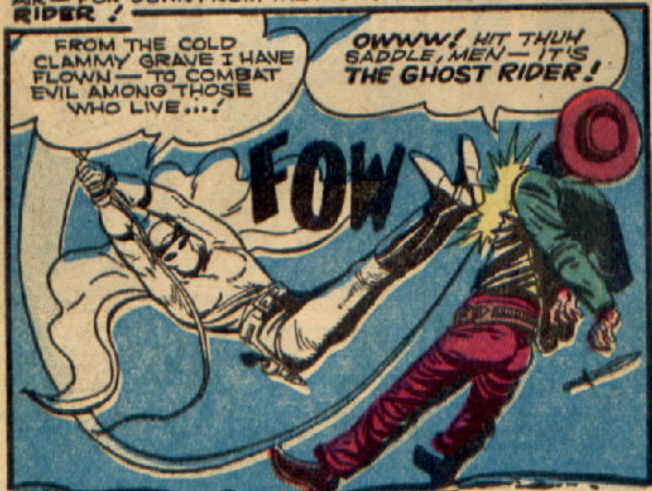


HER SCREAMS ARE NOT WASTED ON THE STILL DESERT AIR—FOR DOWN FROM THE NIGHT SWINGS THE GHOST RIDER!

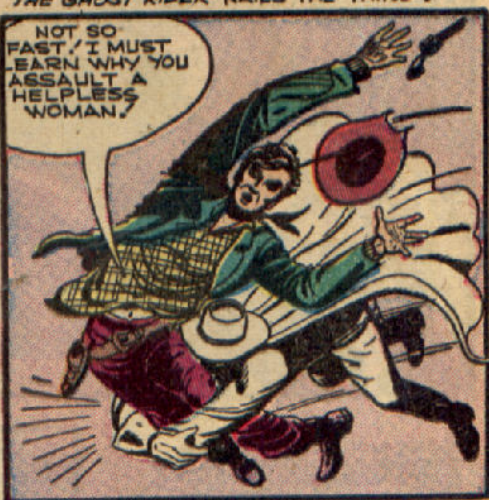
TWO OF THE OWLHOOTS GET AWAY, BUT THE GHOST RIDER NAILS THE THIRD!

FROM THE COLD CLAMMY GRAVE I HAVE FLOWN—TO COMBAT EVIL AMONG THOSE WHO LIVE...

OWWWW! HIT THUH SADDLE, MEN—IT'S THE GHOST RIDER!



NOT SO FAST, I MUST LEARN WHY YOU ASSAULT A HELPLESS WOMAN.



THE GHOST RIDER EFFECTS A QUICK CAPE REVERSAL—FROM WHITE TO BLACK... AND THE OWLHOOT'S EYES BULGE WITH TERROR, AS HE IS GRIPPED BY SEEMINGLY DISEMBODED HANDS—

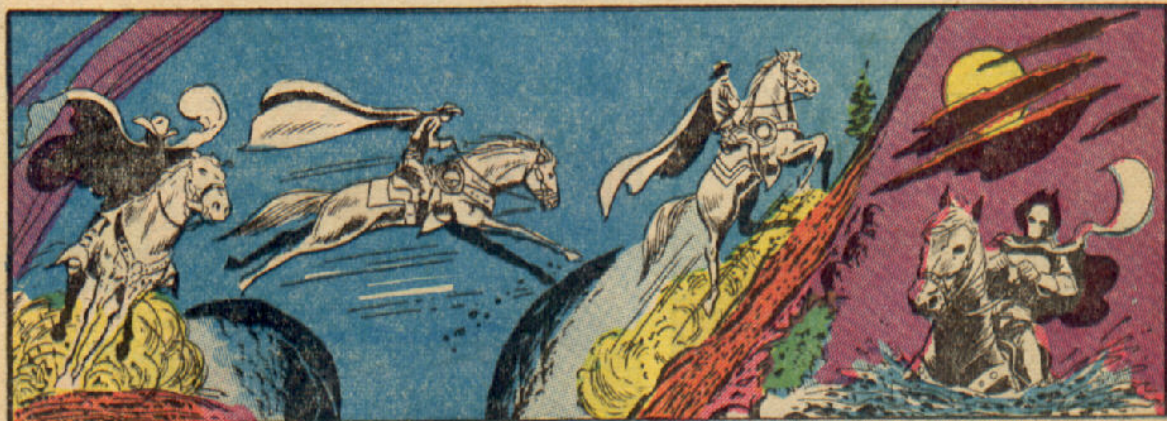
AFTER THE SLOW FALTERING CONFESSION—

P-PLEASE, GHOST RIDER—P-DON'T DRAG ME TO THE GRAVE! I'LL TELL YUH WHATEVER YUH WANT TO KNOW...

THIS IS THE VERY GANG I CAME TO THE TERRITORY TO TRACK DOWN... BUT NOW THAT THEY KNOW I AM ON THEIR TRAIL, THE COLONEL'S LIFE IS IN DANGER, EVEN AS I STAND HERE, THEY MUST BE ON THEIR WAY TO THEIR MOUNTAIN HIDEOUT TO KILL THE POOR COLONEL, AND THEN DISPERSE... I HAVE TARRIED TOO LONG—IT MAY BE TOO LATE TO SAVE HIM...







AND SO BEGINS A GRIM RACE BETWEEN THE GHOST RIDER AND DEATH! SPURRED ON BY HIS MASTER, SPECTRE SPEEDS FASTER THAN THE WIND — ACROSS THE PLAINS — OVER CHASMS — UP STEEP SLOPES — THRU A TURBULENT RIVER — BUT TIME KEEPS TICKING RELENTLESSLY — AND THE OWLHOOTS HAVE A BIG HEAD-START! WILL THE GHOST RIDER GET TO THE MOUNTAIN HIDEOUT IN TIME TO PREVENT MURDER ... ?

**HE MAKES IT!**

THEY  
HAVEN'T  
ARRIVED YET...  
THAT MUST BE  
THE COLONEL!

**BUT WHEN THE GHOST  
RIDER ENTERS —**

STAND FAST,  
SIR! THE  
PASSWORD  
QUICK — OR  
I SHALL  
SHOOT YOU  
FOR A  
YANKEE  
SPY!

YOU ARE  
STEPPING  
CLOSER, SIR.  
YOU GIVE  
ME NO  
CHOICE —  
I MUST  
SHOOT  
YOU!

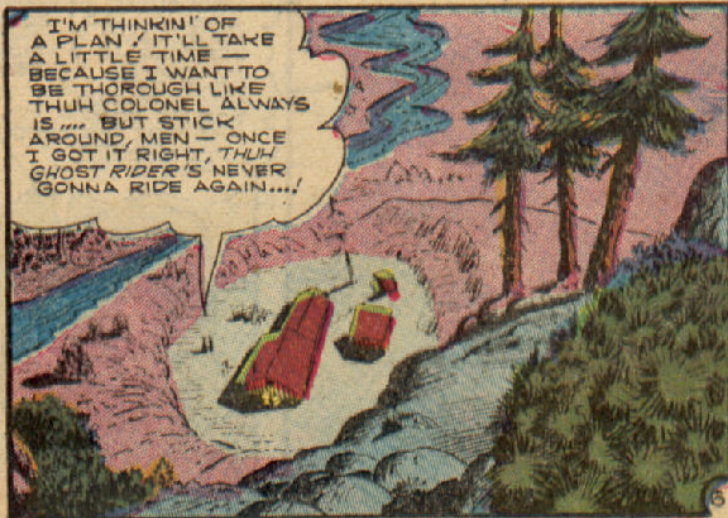
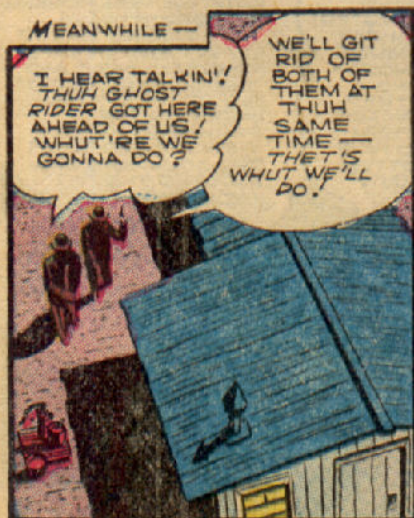
COLONEL  
ELLSWORTH...

**MEANWHILE —**

I HEAR TALKIN'!  
THUH GHOST  
RIDER GOT HERE  
AHEAD OF US!  
WHUT'RE WE  
GONNA DO?

WE'LL GIT  
RID OF  
BOTH OF  
THEM AT  
THUH  
SAME  
TIME —  
THAT'S  
WHUT WE'LL  
DO!

I'M THINKIN' OF  
A PLAN! IT'LL TAKE  
A LITTLE TIME —  
BECAUSE I WANT TO  
BE THOROUGH LIKE  
THUH COLONEL ALWAYS  
IS... BUT STICK  
AROUND, MEN — ONCE  
I GOT IT RIGHT, THUH  
GHOST RIDER'S NEVER  
GONNA RIDE AGAIN...!



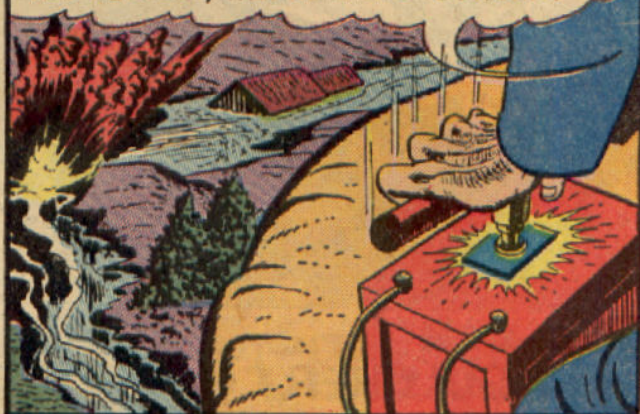


TEN MINUTES LATER, THE OWLHOOTS BEGIN PUTTING THEIR DIABOLIC PLAN INTO EFFECT —



GOOD WORK, MEN — WITH THOSE BOULDERS BLOCKIN' THUH DOORS AN' WINDOWS, THEY'RE LOCKED IN THAR LIKE RATS IN A TRAP.

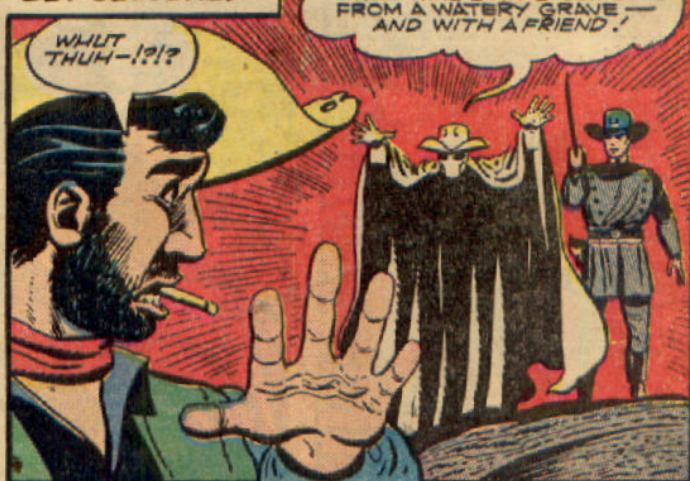
HEH-HEH-HEH ... THUH COLONEL COULDN'T'VE DONE BETTER HIMSELF / THUH BLAST IS CHANGIN' THUH COURSE OF THUH RIVER SO IT'LL FILL UP THUH HOLLOW THUH CABIN'S IN. IF THEY'RE NOT PAID ALREADY, THEY'RE SHORE TO DROWN.



HAW-HEE-HAW-HAW / WE DONE IT, MEN / WE KILLED THUH GHOST RIDER / NOBODY KIN STOP US NOW — WE'RE GONNA BE THUH KING OF THUH WEST...



BUT SUDDENLY —



WHUT THUH-!?!

THIS TIME I HAVE COME FROM A WATERY GRAVE — AND WITH A FRIEND!

THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES MAY BE OVER — BUT NOW I HAVE A PERSONAL WAR TO FINISH.



WATER —

THE GHOST RIDER CALLED ME BY NAME AND TOLD ME HOW YOU'D COME OUT WEST LOOKING FOR ME, DEAR — AND THAT RESTORED MY MEMORY COMPLETELY...

BUT I SAW THUH CABIN UNDER FIVE FOOT OF WATER! THET GHOST RIDER MUST BE A GHOST — NO OTHER WAY FER THEM TO HAVE GOTTEN OUT.

THE VILLAINS WERE TOO THOROUGH IN IMITATING THE COLONEL'S ELABORATE PLANS. THEY GAVE ME TIME TO EFFECT A QUICK CAPE REVERSAL, AND I AND THE COLONEL SLIPPED OUT OF THE SHACK UNSEEN IN THE DARKNESS BEFORE THEY ROLLED DOWN THE BOULDERS AND FLOODED THE HOLLOW...

FAREWELL, FRIENDS — I MUST RIDE ON IN EVERLASTING SEARCH OF EVIL!



END



# the DURANGO KID

A LOT OF TIMES STEVE BRAND HAS TO PRETEND TO BE SOMEBODY ELSE IF HE WANTS TO STAY ALIVE - BUT IT'S SOMETHING NEW WHEN HE HAS TO PRETEND TO BE **HIMSELF!**

IT'S A SLICK TRICK IF YOU CAN DO IT - BUT IT'S ALL PART OF THE "**CODE OF THE DRYGULCHER!**"

ART BY FRED GUARDINEER



A TRAIL LEADING INTO LIGHTNING FORK...

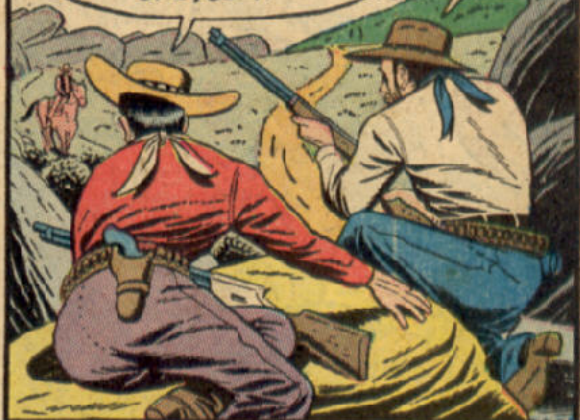
IT'S GOOD WE GOT SPIES IN TOWN. THUH CHIEF MARSHAL'S SENDIN' A DEPUTY IN TUH CLEAN US UP - HOMBRE BY THUH NAME O' STEVE BRAND. HE'S SUPPOSED TUH BE WEARIN' A BLACK VEST AN' A WHITE HAT.

WE'LL BE READY FER'IM, IDAHO JOE!



HYAR COMES SOMEBODY NOW - WHITE HAT AN' BLACK VEST. THET MUST BE STEVE BRAND. MAKE YORE SHOT A GOOD ONE, JEFF.

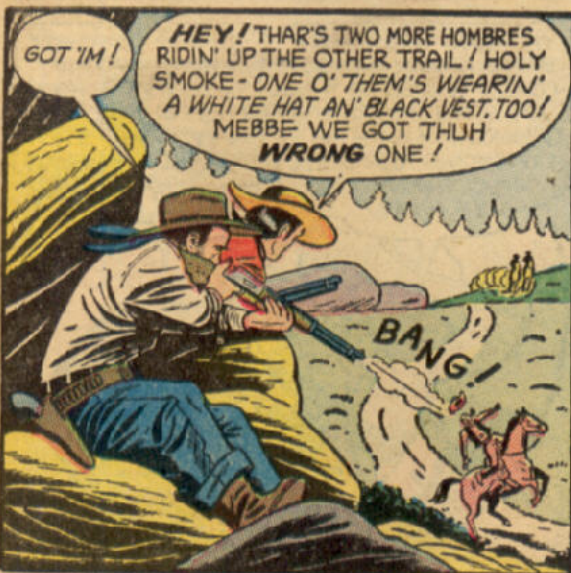
I NEVER MISS, BOSS!



GOT 'IM!

HEY! THAR'S TWO MORE HOMBRES RIDIN' UP THE OTHER TRAIL! HOLY SMOKE - ONE O' THEM'S WEARIN' A WHITE HAT AN' BLACK VEST, TOO! MEBBE WE GOT THUH **WRONG ONE!**

BANG!



DOWN BELOW...

THET HOMBRE - HE'S BEEN SHOT! DRYGULCHED!

QUICK - LET'S GET TO HIM!







*Dere Idaho Joe -  
This is Zeke  
O'Brien, who was  
in jail with  
me. He's a great  
gunslinger. You  
kin use him in  
yore gang.  
Big Mike*





**NEXT DAY... IN A BACK ROOM OF THE RED MUG SALOON...**



BIG MIKE SHORE SENT US A WINNER WHEN HE SENT HIS CELLMATE, ZEKE O'BRIEN, MEN. EVERYBODY IN TOWN THINKS ZEKE IS STEVE BRAND, DEPUTY MARSHAL. NOW'S OUR CHANCE TUH RUSTLE OFF THET BIG BAR-X HERD...

HYAR'S THUH PLAN-ZEKE WILL GO OUT TUH THUH RANGE GUARDS AN' GIT 'EM AWAY FROM THUH HERD. THEY'LL DO WHUT HE SAYS 'CAUSE THEY THINK HE'S DEPUTY MARSHAL. TELL 'EM YUH'RE CHASIN' AN OWLHOOT, ZEKE, AND YUH NEED 'EM FER A POSSE...



THEN, WHEN ALL'S CLEAR, WE JUMP THUH HERD AN' HEAD IT OVER THUH PASS INTOH MEXICO. GOT IT, ZEKE - I MEAN - HAW-HAW - HAW - "STEVE"!



I GET IT, BOSS... LET'S GO PARDNER!

WAL, WHUT YUH GOIN' TUH DO NOW? I'LL GO GET THE RANGE GUARDS, ALL RIGHT, LIKE IDAHO JOE SAID. BUT I'LL BRING THEM UP TO THE PASS- WE'LL BE WAITING FOR JOE AND HIS MEN WHEN THEY BRING THE CATTLE THROUGH...



I GET IT- WE'LL CATCH 'EM RED-HANDED THET WAY- RIGHT?



RIGHT! YOU STICK AROUND HERE, MULEY- AND KEEP YOUR EYES AND EARS OPEN. KEEP UNDER COVER, SO LONG!

**BUT, AS STEVE RIDES AWAY... A NEWCOMER SEES HIM...**



WAL, I'LL BE - I WHUT'S HE DOIN' HYAR?

**...AND ENTERS THE SALOON...**



BIG MIKE! I THOUGHT YOU WUZ IN JAIL!

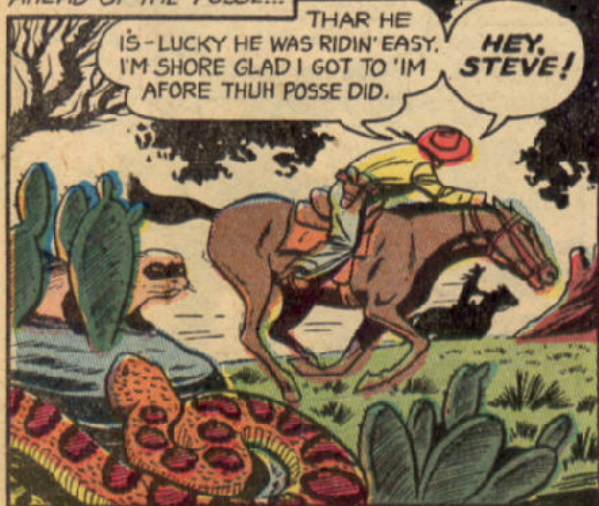
GOT OUT SOONER THAN I EXPECTED, IDAHO JOE. WHUT'S COOKIN'?







**MULEY RIDES FOR THE RANGE - JUST TWO JUMPS AHEAD OF THE POSSE...**



THAR HE IS - LUCKY HE WAS RIDIN' EASY. I'M SHORE GLAD I GOT TO 'IM AFORE THUH POSSE DID.

**HEY, STEVE!**

SO THEY'S IT / BIG MIKE KNOWS WHO YUH ARE FER REAL! THEN IDAHO JOE RILED UP THUH WHOLE TOWN AG'IN YUH - THEY THINK YUH AIN'T WHO YUH ARE, I MEAN - YUH ARE WHO YUH AIN'T - AW, SHUCKS!

I GET IT! QUICK - LET'S CHANGE CLOTHES. TAKE MY HORSE!



HYAR THEY COME AFTER YUH, STEVE.

NOPE. THEY'RE AFTER **YOU** - YOU'RE WEARING MY CLOTHES AND RIDING MY HORSE. GIVEEM A GOOD RUN, MULEY - AND LEAD THEM RIGHT BACK TO TOWN...



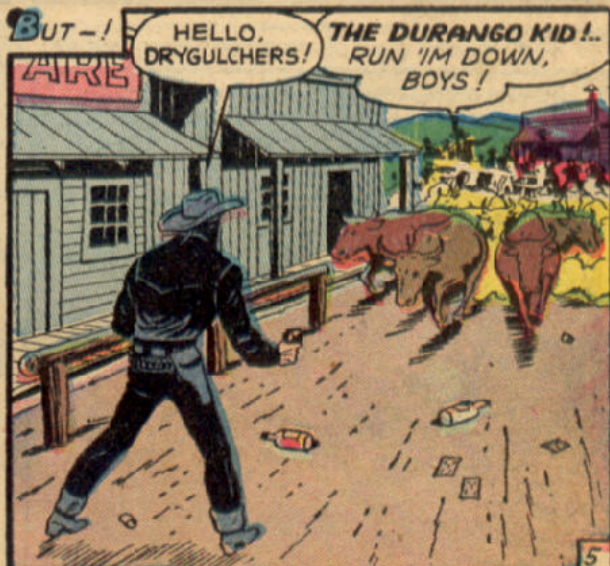
AND NOW - I'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF THE REST OF IT ALONE - AS **THE DURANGO KID!**



**MEANWHILE...**

WE SHORE TOOK THEM RANGE GUARDS BY SURPRISE AND NOW - WELL RUN THUH CATTLE THROUGH THE TOWN!

WITH NOBODY TUH STOP US 'CEPT A BUNCH OF OLD MEN AN' WOMEN! EVERYBODY ELSE IS OUT CHASIN' STEVE BRAND - HAW - HAW!



**BUT - ARE**

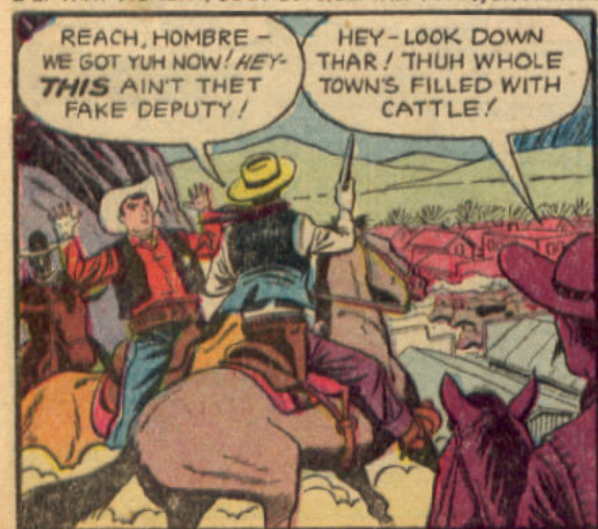
HELLO, DRYGULCHERS!

**THE DURANGO KID!** RUN 'IM DOWN, BOYS!

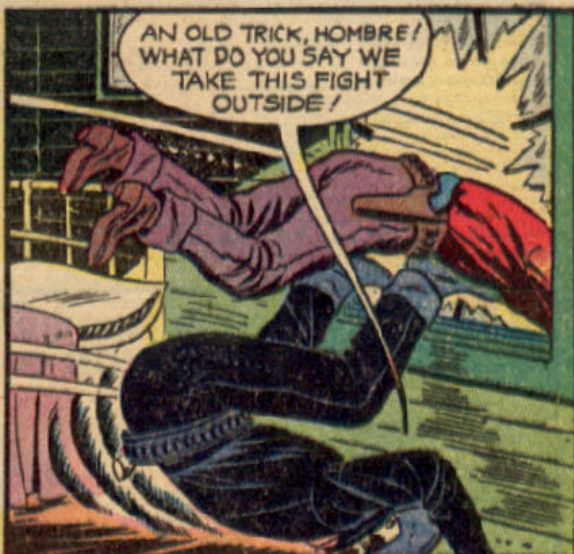




AT THAT MOMENT, JUST OUTSIDE THE TOWN, ON A HILL...









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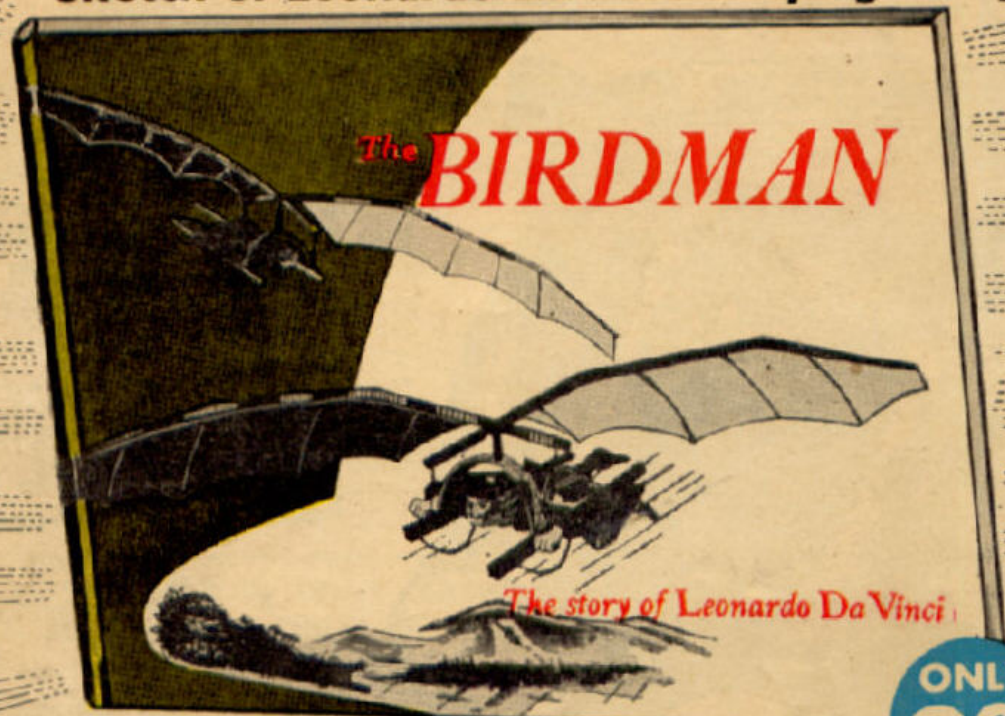
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